

with him: that was his heart. Amid the social pleasures of the capital, he had looked long and fondly into the eyes of Rebecca Burwell, an heiress and a flamboyant and cruel beauty. Now that he was separated from her, he found that the image of the girl had burned itself into his soul, and that his peace of mind was gone. Upon leaving college he had made arrangements to read law under the direction of his friend Wythe, and had taken home his Coke and Littleton. "But to the devil with Coke; Coke is an old scoundrel," wrote the miserable youth to his friend Page. After the manner of young men in love for the first time, he bitterly bemoaned his fate. Numerous letters in which he describes his wretched condition have been preserved. "Inclination tells me to- go," he writes to Page, "receive my sentence and be no longer in suspense; but reason says if you go and your attempt proves unsuccessful, you will be ten times more wretched than ever. If Belinda (a love-name for Rebecca) will not accept of my service, it shall never be offered to another." To be sure not! But the asseveration does credit to his heart.

Sometimes he is more hopeful, as when he writes to his friend Fleming: "I have thought of the cleverest plan of life that can be imagined. You exchange lands for Edgehill, or I mine for Fairfields; you marry Sukey Potter, I marry Rebecca Burwell, join and get a pole-chair and a pair of keen horses, and drive about to all the dances in the country together. How do you like it?" A fine program, but in a few short months he wrote to Fleming again: "With regard to the scheme I proposed to you sometime since, I am sorry to tell you it is totally frustrated by Miss Rebecca Burwell's marriage with Jacquelin Ambler."

The young man drowned his disappointment in dull old Coke. He read deeply of the law, following its history back beyond Coke, beyond Littleton, beyond Bracton, even to its Anglo-Saxon origins. Abstracts from Jefferson's note-book, kept while he was a student of the law, have come down to us, and these shonv that he had the instincts of a scholar, patient, accurate and fearless in his investigations. For four years he